

April 30, 2003

Assistance for DHS Caseworkers Working with Deaf Children

Due to the extraordinary needs of children and youth who are deaf, resources beyond our normal cadre of services are needed in order to best provide appropriate services to children who are deaf or who have deaf parents.

A special mental health team at the Utah Community Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (commonly called the Deaf Center) has been developed to help children who are in trauma—from physical abuse, sexual abuse, removal from home, mental illness, school failure, and other traumatic experiences.

This is a volunteer resource, treatment and consultation team and is not a team required by state law. It has no legal standing or policy requirement but is simply used to strengthen and assist services being provided to deaf children. The team is culturally sensitive to deaf children and their unique needs. It has been developed in hopes of providing “best practice” services to children in trauma.

Consultation Team: The team itself includes about a dozen people who have been approached with the idea of providing these consultation services. However, generally only a small core team of members would be convened to consult with workers on a particularly difficult case. The trauma team has been approached with this proposal and they are eager to assist. They are working on protocols now to establish how they can best serve. The team plans to use the multi-agency, “FACT forms” that were developed by the AG’s office with the approval of the Governor for confidentiality, consent and release of information purposes. Obviously, much of the consultation will/may be done without giving names and identifying information about the family. When identifying information is shared—it will be in the course of a protective service investigation or with the consent of the parents, such as a Child and Family Team meeting currently being done by DCFS staff.

Members of the Consultation Team include: **(Deaf Center Phone # 801-263-4860)**

*** All phone number are area code 801***

Annette Stewart, LCSW	Team Leader Deaf Center	263-4892	ajstewart@utah.gov
Joene Nicoliason, MH Counselor	Deaf Center	313-6815	jfnicolaisen@utah.gov
Lynnette Johnson, CSW	Deaf Center	265-9322	lynnettejonsson@aol.com
Kristylynne Brady, LCSW	Private Therapist	265-9322	kristylynnebrady@aol.com
Richard Rose	Private Provider	313-6808 (tty)	richardrose@utah.gov
Petra Rose, PhD	Principal of JMS School	253-1331 (tty)	petra@jeanmassieu.org
Sheryl Ginsberg, LCSW	Valley Mental Health	284-4990	sherylg@vmh.com

Robin Tracy	DCFS Caseworker	468-0194, 652-2359 cell	ROBINTRACY@utah.gov
Leah Voorhies	School Psychologist USDB- Salt Lake	464-0840	leahv@usdb.org
Rachelle Hester	School Psychologist USDB- Ogden	629-4770	rachelleh@usdb.org
Bena Martin	School Counselor, USDB-Salt Lake/ Provo	464-0875	Roses@usdb.org

(Most of these people are ASL fluent and several are deaf. Each of them has vast experience in working with the Deaf.)

Members of this team can be consulted individually or a core team can be pulled together quickly in an effort to have the expertise of more individuals on a particularly difficult case. This team may be used to help decide whether or not sufficient help/services/safeguards can be put in place to avoid removing a child from home.

This consultation team may be particularly helpful for DHS caseworkers who live farther away from the Wasatch front and don't have access to many of the services available there.

When dealing with Deaf individuals, a Certified Professional Interpreter should always be used. Please do not depend on a family member or other individual to “interpret” for the Deaf individual. DHS currently has a contract with:

Interwest Interpreting Services
(Jeff & Vicky)
779 North 1180 East
Orem, Utah 84097
1-801-224-7683
1-866-224-7683 (24 hours, Toll Free)
1-801-224-7223 (Fax)

PROCESS FOR DCFS WORKERS:

1. When a CPS intake worker receives a referral on a case where the parents or an alleged victim is deaf, the worker should immediately make arrangements for a Certified Professional Interpreter to attend any meeting with the Deaf parties. (This applies unless the worker is fluent in ASL.)
 - A. Ask referent if child has any language barriers.
 - B. Identify type and if an interpreter is needed, then note the results in the referral narrative.
 - C. If the child is non-speaking/non-hearing, please contact Interwest Interpreting Services at 1-866-224-7683(toll free) and leave them a message that a CPS

worker may be requesting their services in the next few days (or sooner if a red tag). This will help Interwest begin arrangements to supply a signer.)

D. Also put the following note in the narrative, "Caseworker may contact Robin Tracy, DCFS, cell 652-2359, for assistance." Robin Tracy is available to staff non-speaking/non-hearing referrals with Intake. Please contact her at 652-2359.

2. A worker may request that a member of the Consultation Team accompany them to the house to do an initial assessment of the home and family circumstances. (It should be noted that even though a consultation team member may be ASL fluent, a Certified Professional Interpreter is needed.) The consultation team member should only accompany the worker with the consent of the family.
3. When planning a CFT (Child and Family Team) meeting, a Certified Professional Interpreter needs to be present to assure good communication and understanding between all of the parties.
4. Care should be taken to maintain confidentiality. (This is of course, important and expected in all cases, but gets even more difficult when dealing with the Deaf community due to the small number of people who are fluent in sign language.)
5. Members of the consultation team may also serve on the Child and Family Team, as needed.

(The above process can be used as an example for other divisions, if desired.)